



GREATER WASHINGTON
Board of Trade

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September 20, 2005

The Honorable John A. Rollison III
Special Advisor to the Secretary
Chairman, Advisory Panel on HOT Lanes
Virginia Department of Transportation
1401 East Broad St.
Richmond, VA 23219

Jack
Dear Chairman ~~Rollison~~:

Thank you for your leadership of the Virginia Department of Transportation's Advisory Panel for High Occupancy Toll Lanes. A regional system of HOT lanes is a priority of the Greater Washington Board of Trade and we appreciate the Panel members' work in evaluating this important concept as well the evaluation of the two Public-Private Transportation Act (PPTA) projects under consideration.

Consistent with the attached Board of Trade policy, we enthusiastically support the construction of HOT lanes on the I-95 / 395 Corridor with a portion of revenues generated allocated for corridor transit improvements. We urge the Commonwealth Transportation Board and VDOT to insure that excess revenues raised in the HOV / HOT system are spent on transportation improvements *within the corridor and not diverted to other parts of the Commonwealth.*

The Virginia Department of Transportation should move forward to implement a HOV / HOT system along the I-95 / 395 corridor as proposed by the two teams. A HOV / HOT system will have several benefits for travelers in the corridor:

- Toll revenue will finance construction of additional lane capacity.
- The new lanes and enhanced enforcement will provide additional capacity that can be used to accommodate greater HOV and transit use.
- The additional capacity can also be sold to non-HOV-3 vehicles to help reduce congestion in the general purpose lanes.
- Variable tolls in the HOV / HOT lanes will manage the flow of traffic and insure a free-flow experience for HOV-3, buses and HOT lane users.

Use of the PPTA procurement process is appropriate in this instance. We call on VDOT to closely examine the two financial plans of each team with an eye

toward maximizing the Commonwealth's short and long-run financial benefits as well as timely access to excess toll revenues to implement additional transportation improvements in the corridor.

VDOT should make sure that existing transit systems -- Virginia Railway Express, public and private bus operators -- will benefit from the proposal chosen. It is important that these successful, existing transit modes are provided means to expand service in the corridor.

- We do not believe that the current slug system will be significantly damaged. Instead we see the implementation of tolls as encouraging additional carpools, particularly once enhanced enforcement and additional lane capacity improves the HOV experience.
- Additional park and ride spaces are an important element in supporting and enhancing existing transit systems such as VRE, buses and carpools.

While HOT lanes are in use elsewhere they are a new concept for the Commonwealth. Qualifications and experience of the toll operator should be of priority interest in selecting a team.

Finally, we also urge VDOT to work in concert with the Maryland Department of Transportation to develop a future coordinated regional system of HOT lanes. While Maryland is currently approaching value pricing from a general toll perspective, we would be pleased to host any meetings appropriate to explore a regional HOT lanes blueprint.

Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue and for the hard work of the Advisory Panel members.

Sincerely,



Michael Anzilotti
Co-Chair
Greater Washington Board of Trade
Transportation and Environment Committee

Enclosure